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Auburndale	33823	Palm Beach
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Avon Park	33826	Highlands
Babson Park	33827	Polk

Sebastian	32978	Indian River
Sebring	33870	Highlands
Sebring	33871	Highlands
Sebring	33872	Highlands
Seffner	33583	Hillsborough
Seffner	33584	Hillsborough
Seminole	33772	Pinellas
Seminole	33775	Pinellas
Seminole	33776	Pinellas
Seville	32190	Volusia
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Silver Springs	34489	Marion
Sneads	32460	Jackson
Sopchoppy	32358	Wakulla
Sorrento	32776	Lake
South Bay	33493	Palm Beach
Southport	32409	Bay
Sparr	32192	Marion
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Spring Hill	34607	Hernando
Spring Hill	34608	Hernando
Spring Hill	34611	Hernando
Starke	32091	Bradford
Steinhatchee	32359	Taylor
Stuart	34994	Martin
Stuart	34995	Martin
Stuart	34996	Martin
Stuart	34997	Martin
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Old Island Key West

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Glynn Archer Elementary (PreK - 5)	Principal: Dr. Rita Sawyer 1302 White Street Key West, FL 33040 (305) 293-1600/strong>
Key Largo School (PreK - 8)	Principal: Frances St. James 104801 Overseas Key Largo, FL 33037 (305) 453-1255
Marathon High (7-12)	Principal: Dr. Fred Colvard 350 Sombrero Rd Marathon, FL 33050 (305) 289-2480
Poinciana Elementary (PreK-5)	Principal: Pedro Fraga 1212 14th Street Key West, FL 33040 (305) 293-1630
Stanley Switlik Elementary (PreK-6)	Principal: Barbara Wright 3400 Overseas Hwy Marathon, FL 33050 (305) 289-2490
Horace O'Bryant Middle School (6-8)	Principal: Frank Spoto 1105 Leon Street Key West, FL 33040 (305) 296-5628
Key West High (9-12)	Principal: John Welsh 2100 Flagler Ave Key West, FL 33040 (305) 293-1549
Plantation Key School (PreK - 8)	Principal: Sandi Bisceglia 100 Lake Road Tavernier, FL 33070 (305) 853-3281
Sigsbee Elementary School (PreK-5)	Principal: Dr. Rita Sawyer Sigsbee Park Key West, FL 33040 (305) 294-1861
Sugarloaf School (K-8) Big Pine School (PreK-2)	Principal: Theresa Axford RR #2 Crane Road Sugarloaf Key, FL 33044 (305) 745-3282

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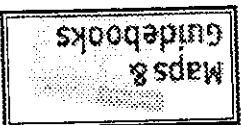
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Local Enforcement:

In case of emergency always dial 911.

Monroe county sheriff's department:

Upper (m.m. 64 to m.m. 112)	305-853-3211
Middle (m.m. 40 to m.m. 63)	305-289-2430
Lower (m.m. 0 to m.m. 39)	305-745-3814
Key West	305-296-2424
or	1-800-273-2677

Fire and rescue dept. (Non-Emergency)

Ocean Reef	305-367-4357
Key Largo Volunteer Fire Dept. (North)	305-451-2701
Key Largo Volunteer Fire Dept. (South)	305-451-2700
Key Largo Volunteer Ambulance Corp	305-451-2766
Tavernier Volunteer Fire Department	305-852-9860
Islamorada Volunteer Fire Department	305-664-4559
Layton Volunteer Fire Department	305-664-4667
Conch Key Volunteer Fire Department	305-289-1313
Marathon Volunteer Fire Department	305-743-5266
Big Pine Key Volunteer Fire Department	305-872-2844
Sugarloaf Volunteer Fire Department	305-743-3665
Big Coppitt Volunteer Fire Department	305-294-9419

Police dept. :

Key Colony Beach Police	305-743-5380
Key West	305-294-2511

Florida Highway Patrol:

Upper	305-853-3200
Middle	305-289-2300
Lower	305-292-6711

Florida Marine Patrol:

Marathon	305-289-2320
After 5 pm	1-800-dial-fmp

U.S. Coast Guard:

Upper	305-664-4404
Middle	305-743-6388
Lower	305-292-8856

Upper Keys Volunteer Search and Rescue:

Volunteer	305-451-3347
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Emergency Health Services:**Hospitals:**

Mariners m.m. 89	305-852-4418
Women's Healthcare	
Sanford L. Yankow M.D.	305-453-0120
100430 Overseas	
Highway	Fax: 305453-7879
Key Largo, Fl, 33037	
Fisherman's m.m. 48.5	305-743-5533
Lower Keys m.m. 5	305-294-5531

Veterans Affairs:

Upper	305-852-7104
Middle	305-289-6009
Lower	305-295-5150
Toll Free	1-800-827-1000

Public Health Department:

Upper	305-853-3240
Middle	305-289-2450
Lower	305-292-6894

Government Services:

**Crocodile Lake Wildlife
Refuge** 305-872-2239

Everglades National Park:

Key Largo 305-852-0304
Headquarters 305-242-7700

**Florida Keys National
Marine Sanctuary** 305-292-0311

**Great White Heron
National Wildlife
Refuge** 305-872-2239

**Key West National
Wildlife Refuge** 305-872-2239

**National Key Deer
Wildlife Refuge** 305-872-2239

Passport Offices:

Middle Keys (County
Court House) 305-743-0079

U.S. Customs:

Upper 305-664-2955
Lower 305-296-5411

U.S. Post Offices:

Key Largo (m.m. 100) 305-451-3155
Tavernier (m.m. 92) 305-852-5255
Islamorada (m.m. 83) 305-664-4738
Long Key (m.m. 68.5) 305-664-4112
Key colony Beach (m.m.
53.5) 305-743-2249
Marathon Shores (m.m.
52.5) 305-743-6050
Marathon (m.m. 50) 305-743-5238
Big Pine Key (m.m. 30) 305-872-2531
Summerland (m.m. 24.5) 305-745-3391
Sugarloaf Key (m.m. 20) 305-745-3211
Key West 305-294-2557

Florida State Services:**Clerk of the circuit courts:**

Upper	305-852-7145
Middle	305-289-6025
Lower	305-292-3550

**Florida dept. of agriculture and
consumer services:**

Toll free	1-800-435-7352
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Environmental protection:

	305-289-2310
Toll free	1-800-342-5367

**Game and Fresh Water Fish
commission:**

Emergency Only	1-800-432-2046
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**Highway safety and motor
vehicle dept. :(open Tues.-Fri.)**

Upper	305-853-3562
Middle	305-289-2306
Lower	305-292-6747

Public defender's office:

Upper	305-853-3562
Middle	305-289-2306
Lower	305-292-6747

State attorney's office:

Upper	305-852-7170
Middle	305-743-9471
Lower	305-292-3400

State of Florida general info:

General information 1-850-488-1234

Florida State Park Service:

John Pennekamp Coral
reef State Park 305-451-1202
m.m. 102.5 Key Largo

Indian Key State
Historic Site: 305-664-4815
m.m. 79 Islamorada

Lignumvitae Key State
Botanical Site: 305-664-4815
m.m. 79 Islamorada

Long Key State
Recreation Area: 305-664-4815
m.m. 68

Bahia Honda State
Recreation Area: 305-872-2353
m.m. 36.5

Ft. Zachary Taylor
State Historic Site: 305-292-6713
Key West

Vehicle/Boat Registration:

Upper 305-852-7150
Middle 305-743-5585
Lower 305-294-8403

County Services:

Animal Shelters:

Upper 305-451-0088
Marathon 305-743-3779
Big Pine Key 305-872-3412
Lower Keys 305-294-4857

Florida Keys community College:

Upper 305-852-2737
Middle 305-743-2133
Lower 305-296-9081

Jury courts-clerk:

Plantation 305-852-7178

Marathon	305-289-6091
Big pine Key	305-289-6090
Key West	305-294-4641

Licenses:

Auto/Boat:

Upper	305-852-7150
Middle	305-743-5585
Lower	305-295-5000

Marriage Licenses:

Upper	305-852-7145
Middle	305-289-6027
Lower	305-294-4691

Public Libraries:

Key Largo (m.m. 101.5)	305-451-2396
Islamorada (m.m. 81.5)	305-664-4645
Marathon (m.m. 48.5)	305-743-5156
Key West (Flemming St.)	305-292-3595

Monroe County Social Services:

Upper	305-852-7125
Middle	305-289-6016
Lower	305-292-4408

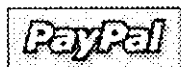
Public Schools:

Links to public school's

Key Largo Elementary School m.m. 105	305-451-1511
Key Largo Middle School m.m. 105	305-451-1511
Plantation Key School m.m. 90	305-853-3281
Coral Shores High School m.m. 90	305-853-3222

Marathon High School 305-289-2480
m.m. 50
Stanley Switlik
Elementary School 305-289-2490
m.m. 49
Sugarloaf
Elementary/Middle School 305-745-3282
m.m. 20

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CURRENT NEWS

Postal Service closes closes Sugarloaf Key office

BY TRAVIS JAMES TRITTEN
[keysnews.com](#)

SUGARLOAF KEY -- The Sugarloaf Shores U.S. post office closed Saturday despite some outcry from residents who have used the facility for decades.

The branch closed because the building's landlord and the U.S. Postal Service were not able to reach an agreement on repairs to the building, according to postal officials.

Some residents claim that eliminating nearly 200 post office boxes will overburden already taxed mail carriers and force former customers to travel miles farther to other branches.

"It is another loss of service to the Lower Keys, and it is an unnecessary loss," said Marge Montana, president of the Sugarloaf Shores Property Owners Association, the group that fought to keep the branch open. "They are going to disrupt an awful lot of people."

Montana and others said they do not believe the Postal Service is closing the branch over the repairs it claims the building needs.

"They wanted [the owner] to spend in excess of \$17,000 to renovate the building," she said. "I think they just wanted to close it."

The asked-for improvements included the installation of 400 additional PO boxes and air conditioning, among other upgrades, Montana said. About 180 residents rented PO boxes at the post office, and the group was able to gather 600 signatures in July for a petition to stop the closure, Montana said.

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"Regarding the Beach closure unfortunate th amenities are the community Key West Poli Department...

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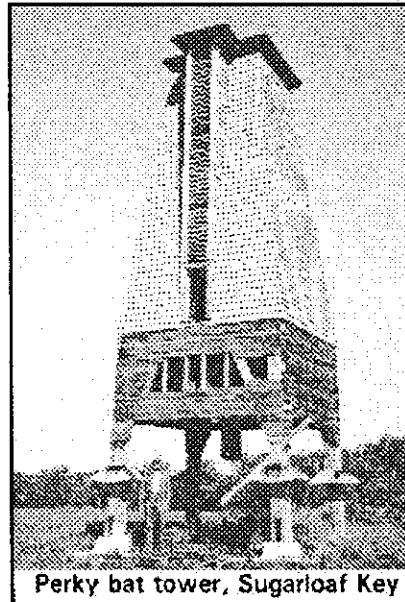
History of Sugarloaf Key

By Jerry Wilkinson

Not much is recorded about the pre-Columbian history of Sugarloaf Key. There is evidence of a huge Native American Indian kitchen midden in the general area of today's high school indicating pre-Columbian inhabitation. Habitation was probably not as permanent as we think of today, but more as temporary fishing or hunting site.

The area was homesteaded by William Sterling Baker and ownership passed on to Mr. B. C. Hopeman in the 1940s then to the Howe family. Later Bob and Viola Howe found an unidentified shipwreck in the process of dredging a channel. The area was first developed in the 1960s.

The serious Lower Keys history buff should refer to writings of John Viele, Historical Preservation Society member and local Cudjoe Key author of three Pineapple Press books (*The Perilous Florida Straits*, *The Pioneers* and *The Wreckers*) and countless newspaper articles, primarily the *Island Navigator*.



Perky bat tower, Sugarloaf Key

Sugarloaf Key was short changed in the name department on early maps. The eccentric British cartographer, DeBrahm named it Glen Kay in 1772 which is not bad for DeBrahm. DeBrahm visited many of the Florida Keys; however, when he needed a name he gave most of them English names. Windley Key was Wright Key, Tea Table Key as Boys Key and Plantation Key was Bull Island. For the better established names he did better i.e., Key West was Hueso and Lower Matecumbe was La Vieja; however, he was thorough. He did name Keys that many of the others of 1700s period passed by without a name.

Sugarloaf Key is located about MM 20 between Cudjoe Key and Saddlebunch Keys. If you are not familiar with the Lower Florida Keys you may see a basic map by [clicking HERE](#). If driving south, you cross onto the island after crossing Bow Channel and if you turn left you will be on old state road 4-A going towards the once popular Pirates Cove Resort. The author is not certain if it ever was US-1. If you are traveling south and turn right where you see the small airplane (June 2001) you will be entering the once community of Chase and Perky. The Perky Bat tower is about a half mile off of highway US-1 then off to your right.

To visit this area from the mainland before 1912 sea travel was used, after which in 1912 rail travel was also available. Vehicle travel became available in 1928 via State Road 4A and ferry boats. From Florida City one would drive over the wooden Card Sound Bridge onto Key Largo and on to lower Lower Matecumbe Key. There a ferry boat would transport you to No Name Key for the drive to Key West passing Sugarloaf Key on the road just mentioned. During the trip, one crossed the railroad twice. First on Upper Matecumbe Key at about MM 81 and remained on the right side going south until crossing the railroad again just after entering Sugarloaf Key. Most of the old highway bridges from this point on to Key West have

been removed. In 1942, the Pirates Cove route was bypassed when the U.S. Navy shortened the travel distance by following the F.E.C. railroad route. The railroad ceased operation after the 1935 hurricane destroyed about 40 miles on track in the Upper Keys. In passing, the Card Sound route in the Upper Keys was also bypassed by following the railroad route via the so-called 18-mile stretch. About 14 miles were saved from Key West to Florida City in 1942. The Navy used federal funds, hence the name change to US-1.

The first recorded English settler actually living on Sugarloaf Key that the author found in the Key West library was Asa Gilbert in 1829. In the Territorial Court papers in the Key West Library are records that Asa Gilbert of Sugarloaf Key did not appear for a jury summons in 1929. He explained to the court that he did not have a boat and produced a witness to substantiate his testimony. As now, jury summons were serious and also a huge problem at that time. Fort Meyers was a northwestern community of Monroe County and traveling to Key West for jury duty was a lot to be expected.

Asa's presence is verified by the 1830 census; however, for Monroe and Dade Counties the 1830 and 40 censuses only showed the head of the household, which Asa was head of a family of one, and the age groups. Asa was in the 50 to 60 year age group. He was not found in the 1840 census for Monroe County. I also checked Dade County just to make certain he had not moved. Remember in 1836 all the Keys north of Bahia Honda were in Dade County. These census reports are generally available on microfilm at your library, or can be purchased as the author did.

The 1850 census reveals three males residing on Sugarloaf Key. They were Jonathon Thompson, age 60, occupation planter; James Anderson, age 70, mariner and Robert Johnson, age 23, mariner. Jonathon Thompson was known as "Happy Jack" after whom there is a small Key, Happy Jack Key, nearby named.

According to a *Putnam Monthly* article, Happy Jack was one of a group of men who wandered throughout the Keys living wherever and however they were able. Others of the group were Paddy Whack, Jolly Whack, Red Jim, Lame Bill, and Old Gilbert. Quite possibility, Old Gilbert was the aforementioned Asa Gilbert.

The *Putman* author went on "... However different their names and varying dispositions, they all united in a common love. The fragrant goddess of whiskey absorbed the affections of their guileless hearts. ... Jack was always disinclined to the world, and Key West probably did not elevate his opinion of human nature. So he settled himself permanently on the key [Sugarloaf Key] we have just described and bent his energies to trapping deer and raising fruit. He is still alive [1856], and likely to live. His solitude is not so uncompromising as Robinson Crusoe's, for the crowds of spongers and fishermen that swarm around all the keys give him sufficient company, indeed more than he deserves."

Happy Jack died less than two years after the article of wounds after tripping a anti-deer gun while he was out walking. Local deer had been a problem to farming on the Lower Keys and trip wire guns had been rigged along the paths of the deer. Happy Jack's farm was on Bow Channel and north of the SR-4A and the railroad crossings.

The 1860 census revealed only one person, a Daniel Dennis, age 55. occupation sail maker from North Carolina. Sail making was probably his skill; however, farming and/or fishing would be more probably. Of course, Happy Jack was no longer with us.

The 1870 census revealed a population explosion. A total of 37 people divided as follows: 17 children, 8 seamen, 6 keeping house, 2 wood cutters, 2 laborers, 1 farmer and 1 boatman. Probably the demand for food in Key West during the Civil War generated this increased population. Key West was a major Gulf Blockading Port for the Union and whose relatively rapid population increase considering its physical size would continue until 1890.

Early permanent island settlers in unincorporated Monroe County were difficult to find. This is demonstrated by the Johnson family who represented one third of the 1870 population, but 10 years earlier were farming on Cudjoe Key.

Another recorded farmer of Sugarloaf Key was Dr. J. Vining Harris (MD), Confederate veteran, permanent resident of Key West, later Superintendent of the Monroe County School Board and namesake of Harris School in Key West.

Dr. Harris's farming efforts were well known in Key West in the late 1890s; however, there is no documentation of him ever shipping a product. In 1897, Dr. Harris added a new element to his farm - sponge cultivation.

According to John

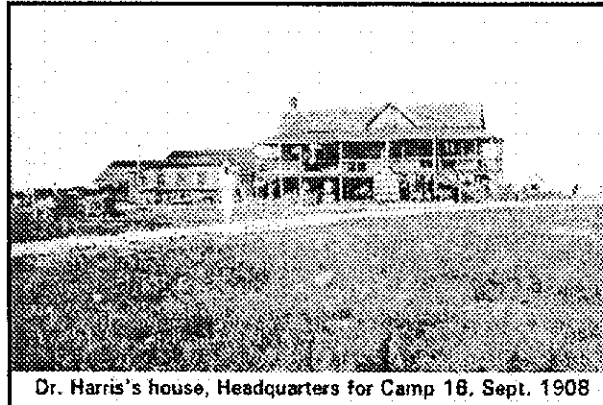
Viele's *The Florida Keys, A History of the Pioneers*, about 1901, he turned over the use of his property, and the house he had built, to Dr. F. H. Moore, head of the U.S. Department of Fisheries to continue the experiment." As far as we know good reports were the only export.

In 1905, Henry Flagler announced that he would construct an extension of his Florida East Coast (F.E.C.) Railway from Homestead, Florida to Key West. To do this he established work camps throughout the Keys. From an unknown newspaper articles, but hand dated 1906, "At present there are 12 camps. No. 80 is on Big Pine Key. No. 81 on Summerland Key and No. 82 at Key West. About 100 negroes are employed in grubbing and butting out the undergrowth preparatory to constructing the road bed. These men have separate camps and buy their supplies at from the commissary: many have their families with them to do the cooking."

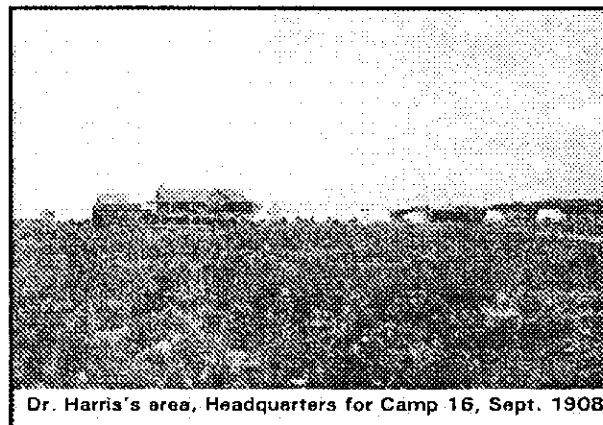
It appears that that the railroad was the next to user of Sugarloaf Key. The records are not complete; however, it appears that the railroad only leased the Harris house. The author finds little written about the railroad's use of Sugarloaf in the

newspapers. In fact, Dr. Harris is found treating the sick and injured at Knight's Key and Key West more than any place else.

One of the next permanent Sugarloaf Key residents were Charles and George Chase. Charles Chase with wife, Hettie, visited Key West in the summer of 1899 with a play that he had written, then visited again in 1906.



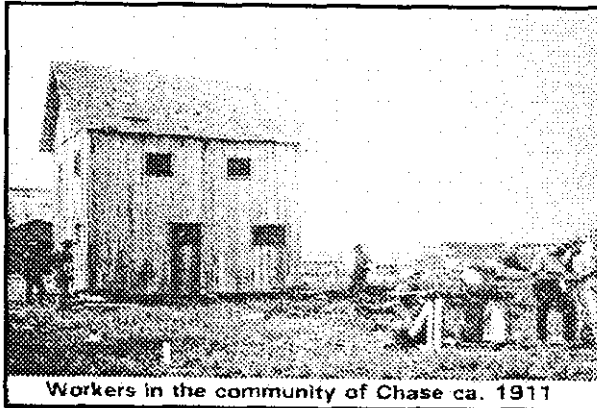
Dr. Harris's house, Headquarters for Camp 16, Sept. 1908



Dr. Harris's area, Headquarters for Camp 16, Sept. 1908

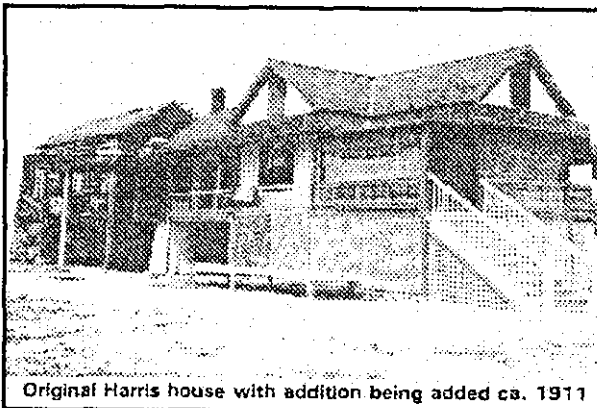
On a later visit to Key West, he met Dr. Moore and became intrigued with sponge cultivation. In 1910, he and brother George, plus a group of English investors, established the Florida Keys Sponge and Fruit (FKSF) Company.

Material, supplies and workers were gathered to construct a community to cultivate and harvest sponges and fruit - an estimated 60 workers. A mini-town plus all the facilities for the sponge cultivation process slowly was built with most materials shipped being in. The old Dr. Harris house was enlarged for the Chase family - Hettie plus 24 year-old son and 14 year-old niece. Finally, a community was in progress in the Lower Keys other than Key West.



Workers in the community of Chase ca. 1911

For the reader who wishes to see and read more about the Charles Chase and his quest to grow sponges [Click HERE](#) and use the [back arrow](#) to return.



Original Harris house with addition being added ca. 1911

The town grew, the railroad passed by the front, a post office of Chase, Florida

established and the outlook was good. The depot was at Mile Post 506, meaning 506 miles from Jacksonville.

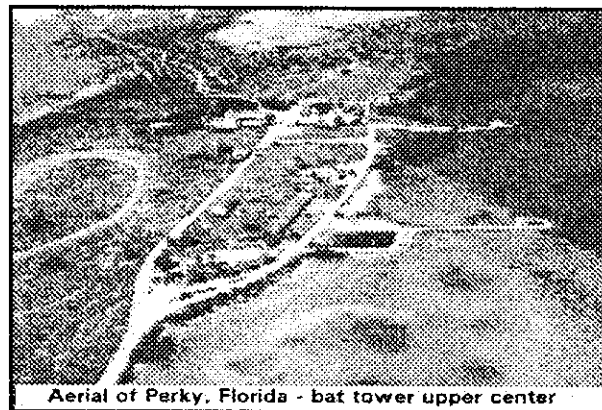
A decision was made to harvest the three year old sponges, divide them into 10 separate pieces and replant as 10 new cultures. This would yield about one million sponges a year. Finances were low so in the summer of 1914 George and Charles went to England to raise additional funds. They succeeded in obtaining commitments, but before the funds were actually collected, Britain declared war on Germany and promptly froze all funds. This late timing of a few months cost them the needed funds and all was lost. The Chase brothers returned to the U.S. and found American investors who were more interested in real estate than sponges. The venture had failed.

One of these real estate investors was Richter Clyde Perky of Denver, but at the time of Miami, who later took the bankrupt FKSF company off the hands of Chase who had by then settled in Key West. Perky was also interested in sponge cultivation, but was not fast to proceed. The 1920s the Florida Land Boom was booming and Perky saw Sugarloaf as a vacation paradise. He also had real estate investments in the Upper Keys. In the meanwhile, he hired Fred Johnson of Key West as superintendent to continue the sponge experiments. State Road 4-A became a reality in 1928,

but the road passed three miles away on the southern shore. He subsidized Monroe County to build a road (today called Sugarloaf Boulevard) to connect his paradise with the highway. Key West would be about 20 driving miles distance. The railroad depot was changed to Perky.

Mosquitoes was his big problem. He knew of oil derricks from his oil interests in Texas, so he had Fred build him a tower. It is 50 feet high and has four wooden shingled sides standing on concrete pillars as shown in the image above.

Perky got the plans from a Dr. Charles Campbell of San Antonio Texas who allegedly had seven bat towers in Texas. Later Johnson, who called it the "bat motel" said there were bats in the Keys. The author calls it the Keys first condo. Perky also purchased secret \$500 of sex-scented bat guano from Dr. Campbell. Johnson said the smell was awful and we stayed away from there and so did the bats. In the aerial photo the bat tower barely visible in the upper right corner of the clearing. The lodge was to the left of the tidal pool for swimming and the pier. The present land strip is to



Aerial of Perky, Florida - bat tower upper center

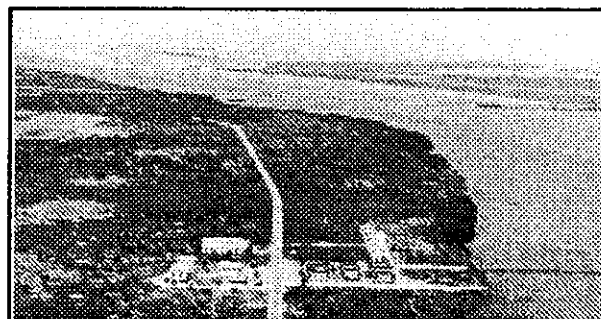
the far right.

There is an unsupported story that Perky brought in 1,000 bats from New Jersey along with a caretaker named Plutonium Pratt. The story goes that the Key West High school band awaited the bats to awake at sunset. Anyway, at sunset the bats awoke, flew off and never returned. Johnson would not support that or any other story other than that of the foul odor. One problem would have been fresh water for the bats.

Mosquitoes or not, the Perky Lodge opened in March 1939. Its days were numbered as the following year Perky died at the age of 62. The Perky Lodge closed in 1940 and three years later in 1943 the lodge and Fred Johnson's house burned.

During this same period, C. Irving Wright purchased the James Johnson ocean side property. In 1929 Wright began his venture of the Pirates Cove Fishing Camp. The timing was right as the first Overseas Highway ran right through the southern edge of the property. In the accompanying photo one can see the railroad and the highway bridges in the background.

The Saturday Evening Post published an illustrated bonefishing article featuring Charles Francis Coe in the September 13, 1930 issue and further



advertising was hardly necessary. It had an 18 room lodge, private cabins and an electric power plant. This notwithstanding it advertised where women could enjoy comfort and luxury while their husbands brought in the fish.

Irving Wright died in 1946 and the hurricane of 1948 took its toll of the structures. Most of the buildings were hauled away and the lodge converted into a private residence.

On Sugarloaf Key the luxury could be contrasted with when Ernest Perez decided to raise hogs on a piece of the old Sterling Baker homestead. Perez had tried grazing cattle on Big Pine Key earlier but the mosquitoes and flies crippled his herd. Hogs were not troubled by these insects and an excellent market was close by with the Cuban population in Key West. Judge H. Padgett joined Perez on a 50 - 50 partnership and soon there were more than they could count. For one reason, they ran free as in open range.

Another famous Sugarloaf Lodge was the lodge that carried its name. Sugarloaf Key became a resort for ailing millionaires a get away place. Key West was close enough for medical attention and supplies and the fishing could not be excelled. The lodge burned in 1950.

Throughout the Keys the end of World War II brought about a new American mobility.

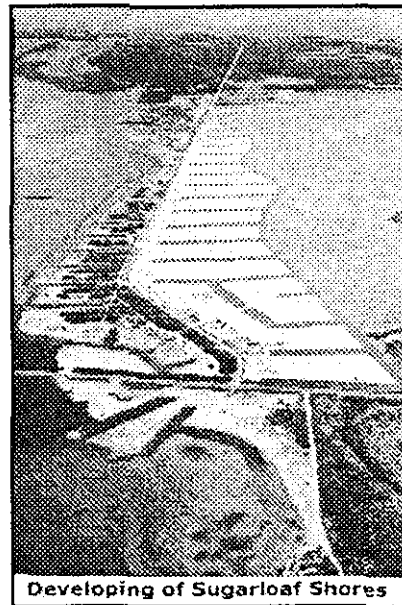
Adventuresome northerners sought new horizons and Sugarloaf was not to be spared. In 1951 huge earth moving equipment appeared in the form of a 12- cubic yard Rimersburg Coal Company drag line. Sugarloaf Shores was about to be born.

The Radford, Robert and son's Crane family were involved in the development of John Pennekamp State Park on Key Largo and more directly with Sugarloaf Key. El Radabob Key is named after the family. Rad for Radford and bob for Robert.

The Sugarloaf development first manifested itself with a grocery store, service station and office with conspicuous sign "Rimersburg Coal Co. The coal company was a Pennsylvania coal strip mining operation which naturally had huge drag lines for excavation of overburden and coal. Houses were first constructed in sections A and B, then a post office and telephone. By 1961 the new Sugar Loaf Lodge was built near the former Perky Lodge. In 1968 residents had to take a hard stand by submitting a four-page petition to



Sugarloaf Lodge circa 1942



Developing of Sugarloaf Shores

pave the roads to their residences.

Fire has destroyed many of the Keys historic structures and the volunteer Sugarloaf volunteer fire department was organized in 1966 located at MM 17. Through the years it has provided primary and mutual aid to surrounding communities.

For a successful community schools and churches are an integral part. The Sugarloaf School K - 12 in 1968 and hence a new high school. Spiritual guidance is provided by the Sugarloaf Baptist Church on Crane Boulevard.

(Note: additional historical documentation and photographs are requested for enhancement of this web page and other Lower Keys pages presently under construction. E-mail jerry142@terranova.net or 852-1620)

Time marches on.

Use Back Arrow to return to Specific Islands, or
to return to the Reading Room index page, [Click HERE](#).

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Sugarloaf Key

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Island Name and Name History

Sugarloaf Key is one of the larger of the lower keys. Its name is derived from the Indian middens that were located on the key and resembled an old fashioned loaf of sugar. There is evidence of inhabitation from the early part of the last century.

Location and Description

Outstanding Characteristics

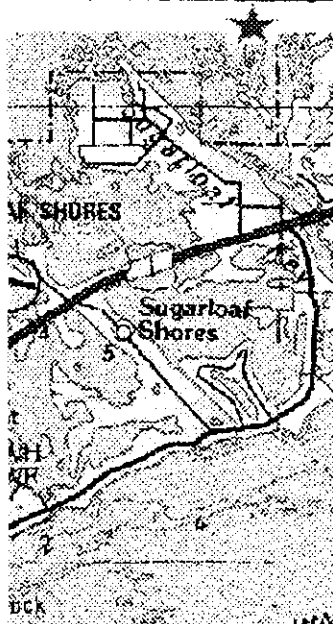
History

Sugarloaf Lodge is located on the central part of the key and is location of a previous settlement named Chase, Florida. The community was developed by Charles and George Chase as a sponge growing business. The cultivation of sponges required cement disks and factory to produce the disks was located where the lodge is now located. Key limes were also cultivated on the key and the Florida Keys Sponge and Fruit Company was formed. The railroad contributed to the growth of the town. The company went bankrupt and the sponge blight that swept the keys in 1917 ended the business. With no business the town withered.

Richter C. Perkey purchased the property and attempted to develop a resort with hunting, fishing and gambling being offered as part of the attractions. Mr. Perky built a road from his property to reach the first government highway in 1927. That road is now the basis of Sugarloaf Boulevard.

To make the area more enticing to visitors Perkey tried to deal with the mosquito problem. He had Mr. Fred Johnson construct a tower as a home to bats which he hoped would make short work of the mosquitoes. The bait that was supposed to attract bats failed and no bats ever occupied the tower. Rumor has it that any bats that came were devoured by the mosquitoes.

With the demise of the railroad, the depression, and Mr. Perkey's death the population dwindled. The Overseas Highway was built on the abandoned rail way path and passed near the old settlement. Population began to be revived in the 1960's. The area is now a



[Click image for larger picture.](#)

thriving community with a public school that services all of the keys from Bahia Honda to Big Coppitt.

County, States & National Parks

Tourism

Bibliography

For more information about the Florida Keys look for the series of books by John Viele

1. The Florida Keys A History of the Pioneers.
 2. The Florida Keys Volume 2 True Stories of the Perilous Straits
 3. The Florida Keys Volume 3 The Wreckers
- published by:
Pineapple Press, Inc.
Sarasota, Florida



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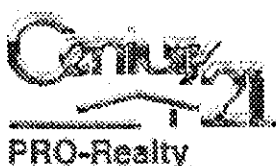
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Winner, Little Palm Island SLAM, Guide to Grand Champion Angler, 1997.

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Hotel Reservation Information for

SUGARLOAF LODGE

U.S. HIGHWAY 1
P.O. BOX 148
SUGARLOAF SHORES, FLORIDA 33040
UNITED STATES

Property Type: Bed & Breakfast
Guest Rooms: 55
From city center:
Distance: 0 - 15 minutes
Area Airport: Key West International

Average Guest Rating: not yet rated

Features and Amenities of SUGARLOAF LODGE

Free Parking
Handicapped Accessible Rooms
Outdoor Pool
Pets Allowed
Coffee Maker in Rooms
Microwave Oven in Rooms
Refrigerator in Rooms
Cable Television
Bar/Lounge on site
Restaurant on site

Area Attractions around SUGARLOAF LODGE

Duval Street - couple miles
Hemingway House - couple miles
Lighthouse Museum - couple miles
Mallory Square - couple miles
Key West Aquarium - couple miles

Restaurants nearby SUGARLOAF LODGE

Sugarloaf Lodge Restaurant - on site

Availability: This property may take up to 24 HOURS to confirm rates and reservations.

REQUEST RESERVATION

Room Rates Range (Actual rate provided upon reservation confirmation)
Standard Room Rate Range: USD
80.00 to 120.00

Convert Currency

Note: Rates are subject to change seasonal variation and special events.

Credit Cards



Check-in Time: 3:00 PM
Check-out Time: 11:00 AM
Guarantee Required
Cancellation Policy (Local Time):
Days Prior to Arrival, 1 Night Deposit
Due Immediately (Credit Card)

Record Last Modified: 22-Apr-99

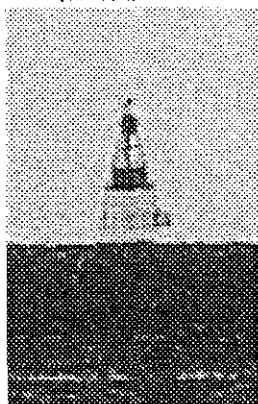
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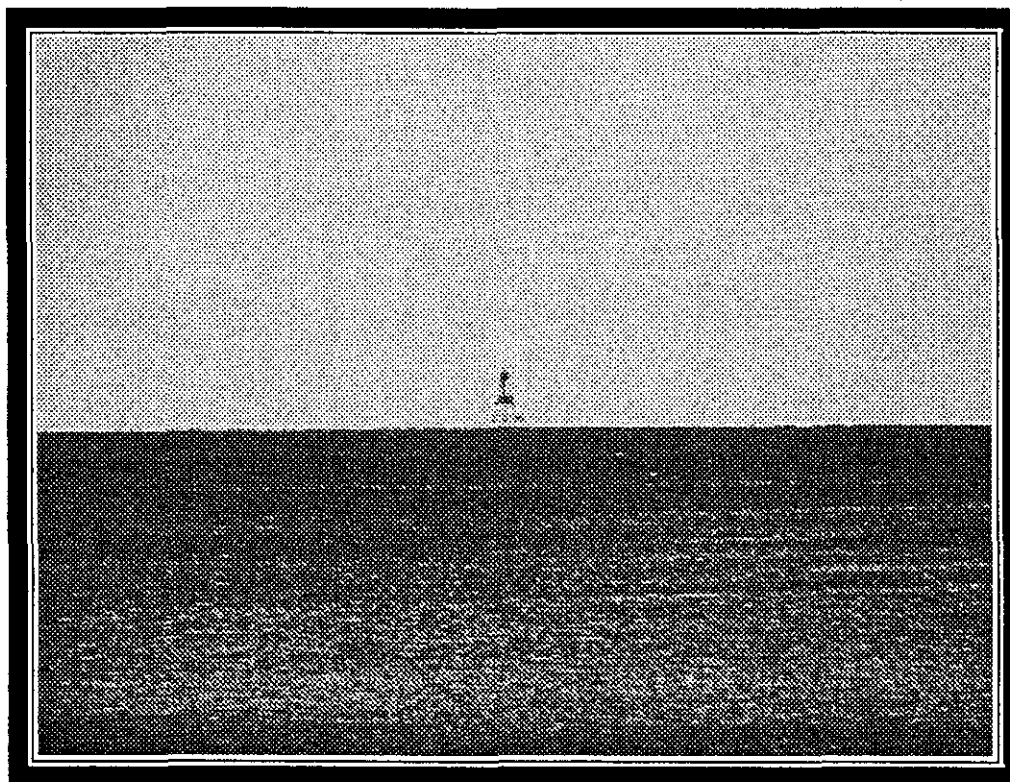


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American Shoal



American Shoal Light Near Sugarloaf Shores, Florida



American Shoal Quick Facts

Year Station Established: 1860

Is the Light operational? YES

Year Light First Lit: 1860

Year Automated: 1963

Shape: Octagonal Skeletal

Tower Height: 109 ft.

Original Optics: 1st Order, Fresnel

Present Optics: VES-25, Solar

Existing Keepers Quarters? Yes

Year Constructed: 1860

Number of Stories: 2

Architectural Style:

Victorian Octagonal

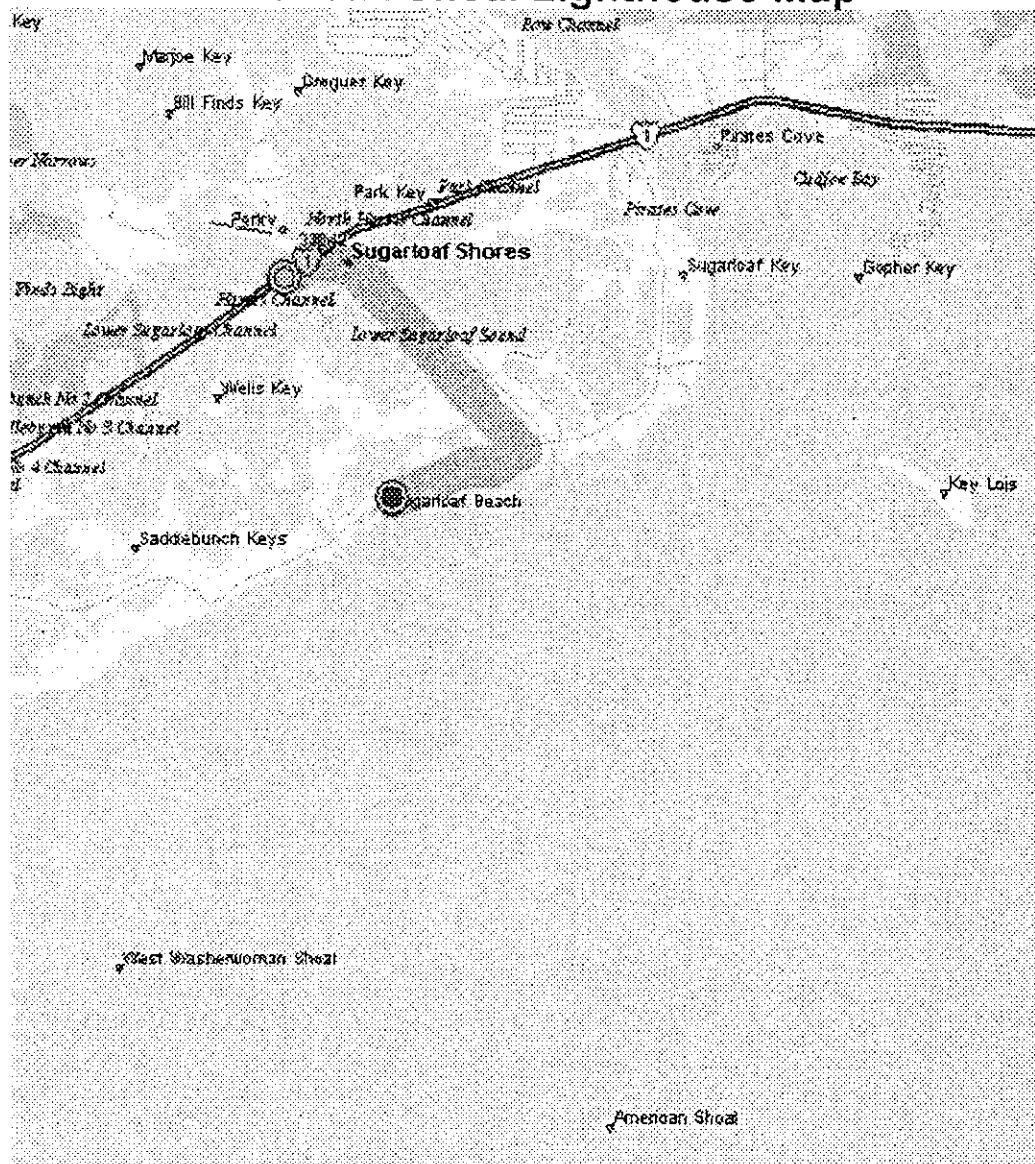
Construction Materials: Cast Iron

American Shoals lighthouse is one of the most remote lighthouses in Florida. Where the other Key lighthouses tend to sit between two destinations, American Shoal light is, well, out of the way. You're either on your way to Europe or you're going to see the lighthouse. Otherwise you probably won't go by it. Like the other Keys lighthouse American Shoal is a skeletal lighthouse, which is vitally important considering the fierce storms that sweep through southern Florida. Any other style lighthouse wouldn't be able to stand the fierce winds and waves, but these skeletal lighthouses still stand.

Directions: [click here for overview map](#) [click here for detail map](#)

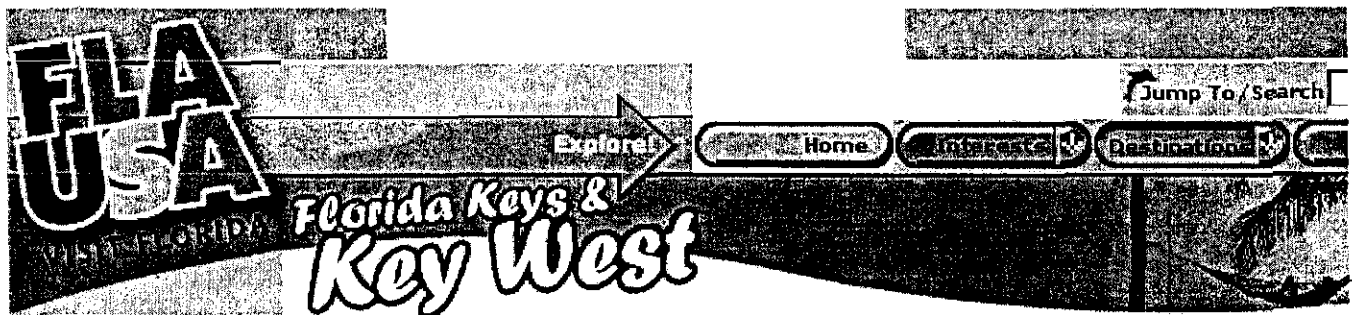
- The best viewing point of American Shoal Lighthouse from land is at Sugarloaf Beach.
- Take Route 1 to Route 939 in Sugarloaf Shores.
- Continue on 939 until you see Route 939A to the right. Take a right onto 939A.
- This will take you to Sugarloaf beach, where you can park and walk out to the beach to see the lighthouse in the distance.

American Shoal Lighthouse Map



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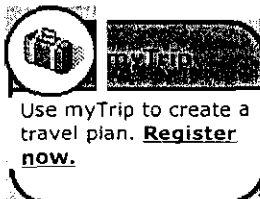
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Campground Information: 212, Open Year-Round

Discounts: KOA Value Card

Facility Amenities: Bait, Boat Ramp, Concessions, Elec. 30 Amp, Elec. 50 Amp, Full Hookups, Grills, Groceries, Group/Youth Camping, Handicapped Facilities, Hot Tub, Ice, Laundry, Modem Hookup, Parking, Pay Phones, Pets Accepted, Pets on Leash, Phone Hookup, Pull Thru Sites, Rec Hall/Clubhouse, Recreational Area, Restaurant Nearby, Restrooms, RV, Showers, Swimming Pool, Tables, Tenters Welcome, Water Access

Location: Beach Access, Beachfront, Waterfront

Payment Options: All Major Credit Cards

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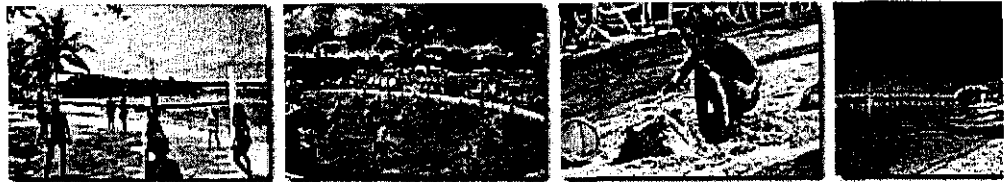
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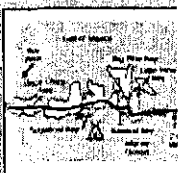
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Now **Sugarloaf** residents who want a PO box must travel eight miles to Summerland **Key** or about 20 miles to **Key West**, she said. Postal Service officials said only that negotiations with the landlord broke down and the service's lease expired Nov. 30.

"Several upgrades were needed to bring [the post office] up to postal requirements," said Enola Rice, spokeswoman for the Postal Service's South Florida District, in a prepared statement. "We entered into negotiations with the building owner in an attempt to extend the lease. Unfortunately, the negotiations were unsuccessful and we [closed] the finance unit on Nov. 30."

Rice said that there might have been some misunderstandings among residents over the closing.

"It is certainly understandable that some customers are unhappy about the closing. Part of their unhappiness may be that they did not receive information about the closing as quickly as they would have liked," she said.

Customers that had PO boxes can opt for rural delivery or open a box at Summerland **Key** post office, which has a 24-hour lobby and full vending equipment, Rice said.

Lloyd Good, owner of the building that once housed the post office, said he collects \$300 a month in rent and would not be able to afford the improvements asked for by the Postal Service.

"It turned out to be about \$20,000 in renovations. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to do the math," Good said. "I don't really think in my heart ... that they wanted any renewal of the lease."

The loss of the PO boxes will create a huge burden for mail delivery drivers in the area who will be swamped with hundreds of new customers, he said.

"I don't think you have heard the last of it," Good said. "I think everyone and their mother is going to be writing in about poor service."

ttritten@keysnews.com

This story published on Fri, Dec 6, 2002

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